



EXHIBIT 8  
DATE 2/9/2015  
HB 358

8 February 2015

Representative Ryan Lynch  
Montana House of Representatives

House Business and Labor Committee

Re: HB 358 - Generally Revise Laws Related to Licensed Addiction Counselors

Dear Representative Lynch and House Business and Labor Committee;

On behalf of NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals, which represents the professional interests of more than 85,000 addiction counselors, educators and other addiction-focused health care professionals in the United States, Canada and abroad, I am writing to support HB 358 for the addition of Licensed Addiction Counselors to be seated on the Behavioral Health Board.

NAADAC supports the importance of having substance use disorder education and specific training as part of the requirement for licensure, as evidenced in the State of Montana. This requirement lines up with the Substance Abuse Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) National Scopes of Practice that has been accepted as credible and reasonable requirements for those serving substance disorder patients. Substance Use/Addiction Disorder have its own set of competencies, skills and attitudes that are specific to this profession and recognized by Federal, State and local government.

Passing this Bill will allow the four professional licensed counselor groups to form a multidisciplinary Board of Behavioral Health. The purpose of this Board is to protect the public and ensure that the standards are met in each profession. These populations are some of the most vulnerable and require the oversight of a Board that is diverse in understanding the complexities of each of the needs each discipline is trained to perform. There are 1,198 Licensed Professional Counselors, 808 Licensed Social Workers, 660 Licensed Addiction Counselors, 156 Licensed Marriage and Family Counselors, and 160 dual Licensed Counselor's. All of these licenses would be under one Board that would be cost effective and efficient.

You are welcome to contact me should you have any questions or need clarification at [cynthia@naadac.org](mailto:cynthia@naadac.org) or 703.741.7686. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Moreno Tuohy, NCACII, CDCIII, SAP  
Executive Director